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Letter dated 20 January 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I enclose herewith a summary of violations committed by Israel against Lebanese sovereignty.

At 1630 hours on 19 January 2004 an Israeli enemy force breached the Blue Line close to the village of Marwahin, when an armoured bulldozer crossed the border fence and entered Lebanese territory at the Birkat Risha outpost, opposite the villages of Bustan and Marwahin. The resistance then fired a rocket at the bulldozer, making a direct hit.

A military spokesman for the enemy later admitted that an Israeli bulldozer which had advanced several metres into Lebanese territory had been hit by a rocket and destroyed. In his statement, he said that one soldier had been killed and another had been seriously injured, and he threatened retaliation for the incident.

At 1030 hours on 20 January 2004 a patrol consisting of international emergency forces based in southern Lebanon, accompanied by officers of the Lebanese unit that liaises with those forces, conducted an inspection of the site where the breach had occurred. After taking the necessary measurements, using topographical equipment, they established the following facts:

- The enemy armoured bulldozer broke through the technical fence on the Blue Line at the middle post B23, located between the border posts BP8 and BP9, to the east of Birkat Risha, close to the village of Marwahin. The coordinates of the site of the violation are Vertical: 105150 and Horizontal: 129960.
- The Israeli bulldozer spent a long time working at a depth of approximately 26 (25.9) metres and a width of around 200 metres inside Lebanese territory.

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- The enemy bulldozer and its accompanying support had been intent on penetrating further into Lebanese territory, before elements of the resistance were obliged to fire a rocket at the bulldozer in order to prevent it from continuing its advance northwards inside Lebanese territory.

- It is worth noting that, on 2 January 2004, the Israeli enemy breached the Blue Line in the vicinity of the middle post B24, close to the site of the incident, south of Marwahin. On that day, it excavated a plot of Lebanese land measuring approximately 300 metres x 25 metres and took down the border post that marks point B24 (point 46 on the Blue Line) in order to get a clear view of the line of fire in front of its fortified positions close to the Zar'it settlement inside the Occupied Territories.

- On 3 January 2004 the Lebanese liaison unit submitted a written letter of protest to the international emergency forces about the deliberate Israeli violation that had just occurred. They asked those forces to take the necessary steps to prevent the recurrence of such violations, which, if repeated by the enemy, could serve to escalate the situation and heighten tensions.

This grave violation is part of a series of provocative and persistent violations being committed by Israel against the integrity of Lebanon's airspace, territorial waters and territory, in contravention of the principles of international law, of Security Council resolutions and the repeated calls by the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the cessation of such violations.

In light of these violations and the increasingly threatening tone being used by Israel against Lebanon and against the integrity of its territory and its people, Lebanon calls on the Security Council to restrain Israel and to prevent it from carrying out these violations and threats, which are a threat to international security and peace. We call on Israel to bear full responsibility for whatever consequences may ensue.

In calling your attention to the gravity and possible consequences of these violations, I request that this letter of complaint be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 37, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Sami **Kronfol**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative